

WELCOME 10th October 2021 – 20 Pentecost '21 B

Psalm 103 & Luke 11:1-13

(Slides I sent) Welcome! It's great to be together. As has become our custom there are Group Study & Discussion resources for you to use *over the course of the week. As God leads you into the fullness of His word/work in your life he will then introduce you to someone who needs to hear the good news from you. Also... somewhere here today you may feel a nudge - tap - tug. Don't ignore it! That's probably the Holy Spirit prompting you some way. Let's talk about that after worship. Seating w/ care...*

As we move into this week... *I believe...* Everyone believes in something. Miracles. Angels. Science. Aliens. Reason. Everyone trusts, relies on, counts on, accepts as true...has faith in...to believe is simply to be human. *I believe in God...* Suddenly a line is drawn...but it's a blurry line...are we talking about the man upstairs, the Big Guy, Allah, Buddha, one among many who are said to be all the same... ≈ ¼ Aus *I believe in God the Father Almighty...* So begins the Apostle's Creed...an Ancient confession that unites generations & nations. It's an Ancient truth that is a rock of certainty in a shifting society. It's an Ancient framework of secure truth in a stormy world. It's an Ancient witness propelling us into a modern world with a Living Faith that transforms people, cities & nations. It begins with the boldest of declarations. I believe in God the Father Almighty... There is a God...Sovereign...in control of the universe who is simultaneously tender & loving, compassionate & merciful...mindful of human weakness & need.

THAT GOD... the Father wants you to know him...to experience his goodness in all things at all times...to comprehend the depth of his love for you & his desire to bring you into his life now & forever...We'll experience & share that together today.

*"The Lord has made the heavens his throne;
from there he rules over everything."*

*The Lord is like a father to his children,
tender and compassionate to those who fear him.
For he knows how weak we are; he remembers we are only dust.*

Let's pray ...then we'll get stuck into it.

20 Pentecost – '21 B – ANCIENT CREED: LIVING FAITH

Do you remember...? We ask that question often in our house. Not just about passwords or phone #s...but who's doing school drop-off/pick-up, plan for the night's meal, social calendar for the kids...Often, it's also a question about our family history. The last trip to the US/SA...conversation w/ a relative or a visit to some place...a decision made...connection this to that...

Memory is an interesting thing among humans. We are the only species on the planet to organize & categorize & qualify & quantify our memories. We call it **HISTORY**. No other animal does "history" like we do. Memories in the animal kingdom are all about breeding & eating & safety...and those aren't so much passed down in song & story as they are imprinted in the hardwiring of the animal. They just know...& go.

Our **chickens** seem to **NOT** remember that every day we steal & eat their children. We went to **Altina** Wildlife Park over the holidays & as much as the nice guide assured us they had taught the lions, hyenas & African wild dogs how to "do this or that by memory" what every one of those animals really wanted was eat our nice guide. And not one of them would have been bothered by regret/shame had they done so. Our greyhound will not write a tell-all autobiography for posterity's sake.

Part of what it means to be human is to remember. We envision & manage the present w/ reference to the past & by weaving that past into some sort of sensible narrative. Only humans make sense of the present & produce visions of our preferred future by telling stories of the past. When we forget someone's name or when they forget ours...it's like a chasm in the universe opens & swallows us. The horror of Alzheimer's is that it is an attack on the very core of our being...the place where our identity is built from our history...all those connections, shared memories, who we are, whose we are, what we've been or done...It steals our memories & in doing so crushes our humanity. We become "**NOT** who we were." We know that.

One of the most repeated commands in the OT is "Don't forget...!" Small sample:

Remember today, & never forget that the Lord is God in heaven above & here on earth. There is no other god. Dt 4:39 **...be** careful not to forget the Lord, who rescued you from slavery in the land of Egypt. - Dt 6:12 **Beware** that in your plenty you do not forget the Lord your God - Dt 8:11 **Do** not become proud at that time & forget the Lord your God, who rescued you from slavery in the land of Egypt. Do not forget that he led you through the great & terrifying wilderness with poisonous snakes & scorpions, where it was so hot & dry. He gave you water from the rock! – Dt 8:14-15 "Don't forget...!"

Let all that I am praise the LORD; with my whole heart, I will praise his holy name. Let all that I am praise the LORD; **may I never forget** the good things he does for me.

The Psalmist/David remembers God at work in his life. He remembers forgiveness, healing, deliverance, being blessed as God's own royal child, contentment, love, tenderness, abundant overflowing provision, renewal & strengthening, justice, wisdom imparted...To forget any of that is to forget the nature, character & nearness of God. To forget any of those blessings is to forget your very essence made in God's image – designed to live in relationship...a relationship of loving trusting dependence with the Father.

The Lord is like a father to his children,
tender and compassionate to those who fear him.
For he knows how weak we are; he remembers we are only dust.

The Psalmist remembers that **GOD** remembers...how fragile, frail & faltering we are. How lost we are w/o his hand upon us. David remembers a Father who draws close in love, tenderness, compassion. Not a Father who is a threat but one who **IS** love **IS** joy - finds delight in his children - seeks to create life abundant in each of us. "I believe in God the Father" is a relationship not a reason/rationale. In the Large Catechism Luther writes: "if you were to ask a little child: 'My dear, what sort of a God have you? What do you know of Him?' They could say: 'This is my God: first, the Father...'" He looks on you in love - sees you through the corridors of time & eternity & delights in your very existence – wants your life to flourish to the full. He sends his only Son to die/rise so you/I might be his forever & know him deeply fully eternally: **No** one has ever seen God, but the one & only Son, who is himself God & is in closest relationship with the Father, has made him known. Jn 1:18

I believe in God the Father Almighty... And that word "Almighty" points beyond the nearness & tenderness of the Father to God's sovereign rule over all things.

"The Lord has made the heavens his throne; from there he rules over everything."

We are not the authors of our own existence. We are not the boss of our own souls. We are not the masters of our own fate or captains of our own destiny. We will not save or destroy the planet. Those are all above our pay-grade & rank. There is only One who stands above life as we know it to destroy death & its myriad threats.

The Father loves the Son & has placed **ALL** things in his hands. – Jn 3:35

"All things"...from the distant galaxies to the ground beneath your feet to the breath w/in your lungs & the blood in your veins...**THAT GOD...**the Father wants you to know him...to experience his goodness in all things at all times...to comprehend the depth of his love for you & his desire to bring you into his life now & forever...

Take it home...

If I truly believed in God the Father Almighty, I would/I am _____. **PRAY**

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

We're going to play a little game this morning...I'm going to say something & if you believe I'm telling the Truth...put your hand up. BUT...If you believe what I said is wrong/false...cross your arms. Let's do one for practice...

My name is John – T

I even have a slide to help us out – **slide goes up**

A butterfly has about 12,000 eyes -- T

Thumbnails grow faster than fingernails -- F

At any given moment there are about 1,800 thunderstorms happening somewhere on earth -- T

Mosquitos have more teeth than people -- T (about 47 teeth while humans have 32)

It takes about 250 peanuts to make 500 g of peanut butter -- F (720)

Besides humans, the only other mammal that can get sunburned is a pig -- T

For the next few weeks we'll be looking at what is called the Apostle's Creed...little by little because it takes some time to explore the whole thing.

I want you to know that every word of that Creed (statement of faith – belief) is True. You can trust it. You can count on it just like you can count on mom or dad coming to you in the middle of the night if you wake up feeling sick. You can trust it like you can trust that if you drop something it will hit the floor. It points you straight to God & you can trust him for everything.

Let's Pray...